ecology and environment, inc.
111 WEST JACKSON BLVD., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604, TEL. 312-663-9415
International Specialists in the Environment

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TO: Colleen Hart, U.S. EPA
FROM: Kathy Bell, FIT
DATE: October 8, 1991
SUBJECT: Mobil Chemical Co Phosphorus Div Gary Plt Site,
Gary, Indiana
IND000606731/F05-9104-139/FIN0548PA

The Mobil Chemical Phosphorus Div Gary Plt site is located in Gary, Indiana, at 1040 Michigan Street, approximately 2,000 feet west of the interchange of Interstate Highways 90 and 65. The 12-acre site consists of two areas: a tank facility area (located at 1040 Michigan Street), and a dumping area located southeast of the tank area. A concrete catch basin, used as a primary separator, is also present on-site. Originally, process waste was identified as having been disposed of exclusively at the tank facility. However, it was later discovered that this process waste may have been disposed of in the area southeast of the tank facility, east of Michigan Street.

The site was operated by Mobil Chemical Company from 1965 until 1975. Following this period, the site remained inactive until November, 1981, when the site was sold to Montgomery Tank Lines. File information indicates that the site is currently active. Approximately 12 workers are employed by Montgomery Tank Lines, which uses part of the facility as a transfer station for trucks carrying food products and/or soap.

File information states that prior to sale, Mobil Mining and Minerals Company, a division of Mobil Oil Corporation, reported that 100 tons of drummed plant wastes were buried on-site. The primary hazardous

components of the waste were arsenic mixed with large amounts of clay and sand from filtering operations, and low levels of other metallic compounds including selenium, antimony, iron, magnesium, and manganese.

Analytical results from soil/sediment samples collected on-site by Ecology and Environment, Inc., Field Investigation Team (FIT) on February 18, 1987, indicate the presence of hazardous substances in all of the samples. Organic analysis results for samples collected from the catch basin revealed levels of toluene (15 mg/kg), ethyl benzene (33 mg/kg), total xylenes (160 mg/kg), 1,2-dichlorobenzene (11 mg/kg), naphthalene (20 mg/kg), 2-methyl-naphthalene (10 mg/kg), 3-nitroaniline (30 mg/kg), n-nitrosodiphenylamine (20 mg/kg), pentachlorophenol (55 mg/kg) and bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (100 mg/kg). Inorganic analysis results revealed cadmium at 3.7 mg/kg and mercury at 7.0 mg/kg. For the north tank area, bis(2-ethylexyl)phthalate was detected at 14 mg/kg.

No sampling has been conducted on the dumping area adjacent to the tank area.

A potential exists for the contaminatin of groundwater and surface water in the vicinity of the Mobil Chemical Co Phosphorus Div Gary Plt site, based on the following reasons. The high permeability of the subsurface materials would facilitate the migration of contaminants to groundwater. In the event of a heavy rate of precipitation, the potential would increase for the downward migration of contaminants to area groundwater, leading to potential upper and lower aquifer contamination. The population within a 4-mile radius of the site receives drinking water from Lake Michigan.

The potential for migration to surface water is likely because of the proximity of a 5-acre lake present on-site. This on-site lake is allegedly used for fishing and picnic tables are located directly adjacent to the lake.

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